

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 8, 9, 12-14, 24 and 30 as indicated.

1. (Currently Amended) A process for producing tissue webs comprising the steps of:

forming a web from an aqueous suspension of fibers; and
while having a solids content of at least 10%, passing said web on a porous fabric through a nip and onto a heated drum, wherein the air permeability of the porous fabric is at least 400 cfm, said web having a residence time in said nip of at least about 10 milliseconds and wherein said nip subjects said web to a temperature and pressure sufficient to expel at least 20% of the moisture contained in the web, said web having a basis weight of less than about 30 pounds per ream.

2. (Original) A process as defined in claim 1, wherein said porous fabric contacts one side of said web, said porous fabric covering less than 50% of the surface area of the side of the web when passed through the nip.

3. (Original) A process as defined in claim 1, wherein said web has a residence time of at least 20 milliseconds in said nip.

4. (Original) A process as defined in claim 1, wherein said web is subjected to a temperature of at least 212°F in said nip.

5. (Original) A process as defined in claim 1, wherein said web is subjected to a temperature of from about 240°F to about 300°F within said nip.

6. (Original) A process as defined in claim 1, wherein said web is subjected to a pressure of from about 150 psi to about 600 psi in said nip.

7. (Original) A process as defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of passing said web through a dewatering device prior to passing said web through the nip.

8. (Currently Amended) A process as defined in claim 8 7, wherein said dewatering device comprises an air press.

9. (Currently Amended) A process as defined in claim 8 7, wherein said dewatering device comprises a capillary dewatering device.

10. (Original) A process as defined in claim 1, wherein said porous fabric has an air permeability of at least 500 cfm.

11. (Original) A process as defined in claim 1, wherein said porous fabric has a knuckle density of at least 100 knuckles per square centimeter.

12. (Currently Amended) A process for producing tissue webs comprising the steps of:

forming a web from an aqueous suspension of fibers, said aqueous suspension containing pulp fibers;

placing said web onto a porous fabric that has an air permability of at least 400 cfm;

passing said web through a dewatering device such that said web has a solids content of at least 10%; and

thereafter passing said web through a nip while said web is on said porous fabric, said nip being formed between a press roll and a heated drum, said drum being heated to a temperature of at least 212°F, said web having a residence time within said nip of at least 10 milliseconds.

13. (Currently Amended) A process as defined in claim 12, wherein said porous fabric contacts one side of said web, said porous fabric covering contacting less than 50% of the surface area of the side of the web when passed through said nip.

14. (Currently Amended) A process as defined in claim 12, wherein said porous fabric contacts one side of said web, said porous fabric covering contacting less than 30% of the surface area of the side of the web when passed through said nip.

15. (Original) A process as defined in claim 12, wherein said dewatering device comprises an air press.

16. (Original) A process as defined in claim 12, wherein said dewatering device comprises a capillary dewatering device.

17. (Original) A process as defined in claim 12, wherein said drum is heated to a temperature of at least 220°F and wherein said web is subjected to a pressure of from about 150 psi to about 600 psi when passing through said nip.

18. (Original) A process as defined in claim 12, wherein said web has a residence time of at least 20 milliseconds within said nip.

19. (Original) A process as defined in claim 12, wherein said web has a basis weight of from about 6 pounds per ream to about 30 pounds per ream.

20. (Original) A process as defined in claim 12, wherein passing said web through said nip causes at least 40% of any remaining moisture in the web to be expelled.

21. (Original) A process as defined in claim 12, wherein said press roll comprises a deformable roll.

22. (Original) A process as defined in claim 12, wherein said porous fabric has an air permeability of at least 500 cfm.

23. (Original) A process as defined in claim 22, wherein said porous fabric has a knuckle density of at least 100 knuckles per centimeter squared.

24. (Currently Amended) A process for producing tissue webs comprising the steps of:

forming a web from an aqueous suspension of fibers, said aqueous suspension containing pulp fibers;

placing said web onto a porous fabric, said porous fabric having a knuckle density of from about 100 knuckles per inch to about 500 knuckles per inch and said porous fabric having an air permeability of at least 400 cfm; and

passing said web through a nip and onto a heated drum, said nip being formed between said heated drum and a press roll, said drum being heated to a temperature of at least 212°F, said web being subjected to a temperature and a pressure within said nip sufficient to expel at least 20% of the moisture contained in said web, said web having a basis weight of less than about 30 pounds per ream.

25. (Original) A process as defined in claim 24, wherein said web has a residence time within said nip of at least about 10 milliseconds.

26. (Original) A process as defined in claim 24, further comprising the step of passing said web through a dewatering device prior to being passed through said nip.

27. (Original) A process as defined in claim 24, wherein said web has a solids content of at least 18% when passed through said nip.

28. (Original) A process as defined in claim 24, wherein said web has a solids content of at least 28% when passed through said nip.

29. (Original) A process as defined in claim 24, wherein said web has a residence time within said nip of at least 30 milliseconds.

30. (Currently Amended) A process as defined in claim 24, wherein said porous fabric ~~covers~~ contacts up to about 30% of the surface area of one side of said web when passed through said nip.

31. (Original) A process as defined in claim 24, wherein said web is subjected to a pressure of from about 150 psi to about 600 psi in said nip.

32. (Original) A process as defined in claim 24, wherein said press roll comprises a deformable roll.

33. (Original) A process as defined in claim 24, wherein said porous fabric has an air permeability of at least 500 cfm.